



Idi Amin dies in S Arabia

REUTERS, Jeddah

Former Ugandan dictator Idi Amin, blamed for the murder of tens of thousands of his people in the 1970s, died on Saturday in a Saudi hospital where he had been critically ill for weeks.

"We can confirm that Mr Idi Amin has died from complications due to multiple organ failure," said a senior source at King Faisal Specialist Hospital in the Red Sea city of Jeddah.

The Ugandan embassy in the kingdom would not comment on Amin's death, referring all queries to his family.

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Key Iraq oil pipelines 'sabotaged'

AFP, Baghdad

Iraqi crude exports through Turkey have been halted by sabotage of the key pipeline to the Mediterranean terminal of Ceyhan, Iraq's top oil official said yesterday.

"The oil exports ... have stopped because of the sabotage," acting oil minister Thamer Ghadhban told reporters.

Ghaghban said a fire that broke out Friday after an explosion hit the pipeline had been "isolated."

Friday's halt came just two days after the Turkish energy ministry announced the resumption of exports through the pipeline linking Iraq's northern oilfields around Kirkuk to Ceyhan.

"The fire ... on the Turkey pipeline was sabotage," Ghadhban said, adding that the blaze was isolated by closing nearby valves.

"The fire is under control and will be put down," but it will take at least a week to repair the pipeline, he said.

Ghaghban said the fire was started by an explosion which occurred at around 3:00 am Friday (2300 GMT Thursday) 20 kilometres (13 miles) north of the pumping station at Baiji.

Baiji is about 200 kilometres (125 miles) north of Baghdad and is a vital hub in the network of oil pipelines that criss-cross Iraq.

It also falls within the northern

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PHOTO: STAR

Riot police guard the Badamtali Rocket ghat during hartal hours yesterday, as the government's stopgap service transporting passengers by ferry and government steamers go on, forced by the launch owners' indefinite strike.



PHOTO: STAR

Awami League workers try to force their way through road barricades and a wall of riot police on the corner of Dhanmondi Road No. 32, some 50 metres down the road from the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum, during hartal hours yesterday.

Businessman shot in city by extortionists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Extortionists shot a businessman yesterday evening at Sat Masjid Ghat, Mohammadpur, as he refused to pay toll.

Mohammad Barkat Ullah, 35, suffered bullet injuries to the abdomen and his employee Sultan Ahmed, 50, to the head. The victims were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

A gang of three -- Shamim, Shakil and Monir -- went to Sat Masjid Ghat (Boatghat) in a white car at about 6:15pm while Barkat was inside a cargo launch. Shamim is the son of Abu Sayeed Bepari, commissioner of ward No. 46 of Dhaka City Corporation, said Barkat's mother, Jobeda Khatun.

The criminals shot Barkat as he refused to pay the money they asked as toll. A bullet also hit Sultan. They also damaged his car with hockey sticks before leaving the place.

The victim's mother told the reporters at the DMCH that the gang demanded Tk 5 lakh from Barkat around 15 days ago. They threatened him of dire consequences if he failed to pay the money.

The duty officer at the Mohammadpur Police Station said they heard of the incident but did not know any details.

Charges framed against 9 for killing 4 BTV officials in '75

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The First Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka yesterday framed charges against nine for killing four Bangladesh Television (BTV) officials in November 1975.

Judge Mohammad Sirajul Islam fixed September 30 for trial of the case.

The accused are Lieutenant (retd) Altaf Hossain, assistant directors (suspended) of the BTV Abul Kashem Bagoja and Abdul Awal Sarker, producer (suspended) Lutfar Rahman Talukder, programme controller (retd) Ainul Kabir, duty officer (terminated) Ainuzzaman, first field engineer of Bangladesh Army Md Shahjahan Siraj and army men KAM Zakaria Haider and Abul Kashem.

Of the accused, five are now on bail and the rest still at large.

The slain BTV officials are Programme Director M Monirul Alam, Administrative Officer AFM Siddique, Chief Accounts Officer Akmal Khan and Cameraman Chowdhury Firoj Kayum.

They were shot dead by some military personnel in collaboration with some BTV officials and employees on the night of November 7, 1975. Later their bodies were dumped into a Jheel (lake of sorts) near the BTV Bhaban.

Following the incident, family members of the victims filed separate murder cases with the Gulshan

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DUTP runs 2 yrs behind schedule

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka Urban Transport Project (DUTP) is at least two years behind schedule, condemning commuters to continuing misery.

The project includes redesigned roads, construction of a fly-over and measures to ease traffic congestion. Spearheaded by the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), it was launched in 1999 with a completion target of June 2004. Today, half the project's tasks remain unfinished, according to officials working on the project.

Officials admit that it will be impossible to complete the project within the stipulated time.

The World Bank is backing the Tk 1200 crore scheme but in January it withdrew a Tk 56 crore credit on the grounds that imple-

mentation was too slow. The Bank asked the government to involve a capable institution to speed up the works.

The Communication Ministry's Roads and Highways Department (R&HD) was selected.

Seven months later, no significant improvement can be seen in any of the project's components, and city corporation officials have made allegations of corruption against the Department, which has been assigned the task of restructuring 20 city intersections at a cost of Tk. 23 crore.

The Department is also responsible for improving three inter-district bus terminals at Saydabad, Gabtoli and Mohakhali at a cost of Tk. 60 crore and rebuilding the roads from the city's Mohakhali bus terminal to Malibagh and from

Rampura bridge to Saydabad at a cost of Tk. 89 crore.

Another reason for World Bank displeasure was the city corporation's failure to hand over the three inter-district bus terminals to private operators as planned. Only a few days ago, Communications Minister Nazmul Huda said the government would implement the hand-over.

Meanwhile, chaos continues on various roads where project work has begun. Badly affected intersections include Science Laboratory, New Market, Paltan, Bata signal and Ittefaq.

Completion of the Mohakhali fly-over will be delayed by at least six months, adding to the suffering of people commuting from Uttara to Mothijhil.

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Bogra ammo haul 'Govt trying to scapegoat AL'

UNB, Dhaka

The Awami League (AL) has condemned the government's "heinous move to implicate its leaders and workers" in the Bogra ammunition recovery case.

In a statement yesterday, the AL alleged that the government move was designed to cover up involvement of the ruling BNP and police high-ups in the ammunition trafficking.

"The government is trying to make Awami League leaders and workers the scapegoats by implicating them in the Bogra ammunition haul," the AL said.

In a joint press statement, AL acting President Abdus Samad Azad and General Secretary Abdul Jalil reminded that opposition leader Sheikh Hasina had already demanded international investigation into the ammunition haul to dig out the truth.

"But the government is using police to make fictitious stories in the name of investigation," the statement said.

The AL leaders condemned 'a conspiracy' to implicate Awami League leaders Mohammad Nasim, Abdul Mannan and Jubo League leader Monjurul Alam Mohon in the case.

They recalled that soon after the recovery of ammunition and explosives in Bogra, the prime minister and the home minister had blamed the Awami League without any inquiry, and now police are trying to

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11 accused of killing CU student

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Eleven people including three listed criminals have been accused of killing Md. Omar Faruq, a first year BBA student at Chittagong University, on Thursday.

The three are Azizul Haq, a charge-sheeted accused in the sensational Raozan Buddhist monk murder case, Jane Alam, an accused in seven cases including three for murders and Giasuddin, a notorious criminal.

Omar Faruq was gunned down by an armed gang who raided the house of his brother-in-law and Raozan thana Awami League General Secretary Moslem Khan at Kadalpur in the thana. They shot him, as they did not find the AL leader at his house.

Moslem Khan yesterday filed a case with the Raozan Police Station, accusing 11 people. Moslem alleged that the gang wanted to kill him and his elder brother.

He claimed that the killers are loyal to Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, parliamentary affairs advisor to the prime minister, and his brother Giasuddin Quader

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All but one college go by GPA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Colleges are enrolling students on the basis of the grade point average (GPA) as prescribed by the government, instead of written tests, Education Secretary Mohammad Shahidul Alam said yesterday.

He said only one college went to court to challenge the legality of the system introduced by the government.

"We are now waiting for the court verdict," the secretary added.

Students and guardians are still in confusion following a writ petition filed with the High Court Division by a city college against the legitimacy of the government circular on enrolling students on the basis of the

GPA.

Father Benjamin de Costa, principal of the Notre Dame College, last week filed the writ with the High Court challenging the legitimacy of the government circular.

The court has asked the government to explain why the circular would not be declared illegal and started hearing the case.

The Notre Dame College completed selling of admission form on August 11 but could not hold the admission tests as the hearing on its writ was going on.

The college had a plan to hold the admission tests on August 14 a n d

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Job eludes graduates of some private universities

MUSTAK HOSSAIN

Most private university graduates are finding it increasingly difficult to get jobs.

The job market favours public university graduates and postgraduates, even though private university fees are higher.

"We still prefer MBAs of the Institute of Business Administration (IBA) of Dhaka University," the head of the human resources department of a United States company told The Daily Star.

The perception that public uni-

versities provide better quality MBAs is widespread.

"The intake in private universities is not top quality, so the end product cannot be better," said another human resources director.

Public universities naturally take every opportunity to reinforce the impression that they are first choice. "Students who fail to get admitted into public universities usually end up enrolling at private universities, so one should not expect much quality from them," commented a Dhaka University IBA teacher.

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UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh explores various options, including diplomatic maneuverings on both bilateral and international planes, to make the Indian government abandon its planned river-linking project that could spell disaster for Bangladesh.

"We're giving serious thought to it and planning huge protests...The Indian river-linking project will have manifold adverse implications for us being a lower riparian," a minister told the news agency yesterday.

The minister, who requested not to be named, said the government would try several options for protecting the country's riparian rights.

First, New Delhi will be approached to resolve the matter through bilateral discussion so that they may consider alternative project to tackle the water scarcity without harming lower-riparian Bangladesh.

If Bangladesh failed to convince India, he said, the government would take up the matter with international financial institutions,

donors and world community.

"We'll launch huge protests...We'll appeal to the international financial institutions, donors and international media to hear our legitimate case," the minister said.

On Wednesday, the government lodged a formal protest with India, summoning the acting Indian High Commissioner, Dilip Sinha, to the foreign ministry.

Dhaka requested New Delhi not to move ahead with its planned water project, considering adverse

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PHOTO: AKM MOHSIN

Stilt-houses underneath the Rampura Bridge are home to several families on Biswa Road in the capital. Located near Bangladesh Television offices, the rickety houses hide from view of most passers-by.

682 bullets recovered in Khagrachhari

BSS, Khagrachhari

Army personnel recovered 682 bullets from a deep forest at Kanongupara under Panchhari upazila yesterday.

Acting on a secret information an army patrol team raided the area but miscreants managed to flee, leaving a sack of 303 rifle-bullets.